(c) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has reported that as per its extant branch licensing policy, the decision to open a branch has to be taken by the banks themselves keeping in view the viability aspect of branch/bank. At present, no proposal for opening branches in the State of Manipur are pending with RBI.

Tax on Export Companies

*408. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether over hundreds of exports companies are likely to be adversely hit by the new minimum alternate tax;

(b) if so, the details thereof?

MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Some export companies may have to pay tax under the proposed minimum alternate tax provisions.

(b) Companies operating as hundred per cent Export Oriented Units (EOUs) or as units located in Exports Processing Zone (EPZs) will not have to pay any tax under MAT during the 5-year period of tax exemption. In the case of export companies, the provisions of MAT will apply if the export profits are 70% or more of the total profits of the business. Where there is 90 per cent export turnover, tax equal to 8.6 per cent of book profits would be leviable. In cases of 80 per cent export, the burden of tax would be 4.3 per cent.

Bank Branches in West Bengal

*409. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are considering to open more branches of public sector banks in various States including West Bengal; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) and (b) Under the extant branch licensing policy of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), it is left to teh judgement of commercial banks to open branches in metropolitan, urban and semi urban centres after assessing the need therefor the obtaining the approval of RBI. The proposals for opening of rural branches identified by the banks which are recommended by State Governments/ Union Territories are also considered by the RBI on merits.

However, RBI have given freedom to banks which fulfil the under mentioned criteria to open new branches :

(i) compliance with capital adequacy norm of 8 per cent;

(ii) minimum owned funds of Rs. 100 crores;

(iii) the banks showing net profits for three consecutive years;

(iv) non-performing assets not exceeding 15 per cent of total outstanding loans.

RBI have advised the banks satisfying the above criteria submit to them a yearly plan duly approved by their Board of Directors for opening branches to enable RBI to advise their concerned Regional Offices for issue of licences.

RBI have further reported that during the year 1995-96, they have issued 569 authorisations to public sector banks to open branches in various States/Union Territories, including 16 authorisations for West Bengal.

[English]

Pending Election Petitions

*410. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO :
SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI :

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the election petitions still pending in respect of General Elections held in 1991 and 1996, separetely;

(b) the reasons for the delay in disposal; and

(c) the steps taken for expeditious disposal of these election petitions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL AFFAIRS, LEGISLATIVE AND DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP) : (a) The requisite information as made available by the Election Commission in respect of certain States is enclosed as Statements I-IV which are laid on the Table of the House. The information from the remaining States is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(b) Under election law, trial of an election petition should, so far as is practicable consistency with the interests of justice in respect of the trial, be continued